

WASHINGTON STAR

DATE 11 MayPage A10

file KCIA

House Upholds Korea Aid

By Ron Sarro

Washington Star Staff Writer

The House has refused to provide special counsel Leon Jaworski with the backing he needs to force the South Korean government to cooperate in his investigation of Korean influence-buying on Capitol Hill.

Only hours after Jaworski held a press conference to announce that South Korean President Park Chung Hee had refused to yield a key witness for questioning, the House yesterday voted 254-146 to reject an amendment to its congressional budget cutting out \$56 million in Food for Peace funds for South Korea.

THE AMENDMENT was offered by Rep. Bruce Caputo, R-N.Y., in line with Jaworski's hope for economic leverage over the Koreans. Four months ago when Jaworski began his negotiations with the Koreans he threatened "severe" congressional retaliation if the Koreans failed to cooperate.

"The vote is a clear message to the Koreans they can get away with it now," Caputo said later.

The amendment came up at a time when there seemed to be a shifting attitude in the House toward the Korea scandal. Some members said privately that the pressure for the investigation seemed to be off now that Washington social figure Tongsun Park has publicly testified in the case and made less than spectacular revelations.

Jaworski needed a strong indication from the House that it would cut off economic assistance to South Korea if that government did not make available testimony by former Ambassador Kim Dong Jo, who allegedly made illicit cash payments to at least 24 congressmen.

Jaworski, who has been negotiating for Kim's testimony for months, yesterday detailed his efforts in an 18-page statement to get South Korean agreement on obtaining ex-ambassador Kim's testimony.

Even though he had offered to withdraw all of his demands on the Korean government for cooperation, to take testimony from Kim in a third country, and even to question him through intermediaries, no agreement could be obtained.

JAWORSKI SAID his last meeting with current South Korean Ambassador Kim Yong Shik was held at 11 o'clock yesterday morning and proved

that the "official position of the Republic of Korea remains intractable.

"There will be no questioning of Kim Dong Jo and there will be no statements by him under oath," Jaworski said. "I can only conclude, with considerable regret, that South Korea has determined that the truth will be withheld from Congress.

"As I have stated before, without the testimony of Kim Dong Jo, the investigation will be incomplete," Jaworski said. He said he also refused the Korean offer for Kim Dong Jo to have a telephone interview with House Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. because that would be an inadequate method of investigation.

O'Neill, who hired Jaworski, took a hands-off attitude toward Caputo's mainly symbolic aid cut-off amendment, saying it was "not a leadership" measure. As recently as January, O'Neill said, "I have given my word to Mr. Jaworski that I will do anything that is helpful to the investigation, and if he thinks a resolution would be helpful, I will certainly support it."

ALTHOUGH 7 of the 12 members of the House ethics committee, which is investigating the Korean case, supported Caputo's amendment, Chairman John J. Flynt, D-Ga., voted against it. He was thought to have been working closely with Jaworski. Two other committee Democrats also voted against Caputo's amendment.

There were other indications of the Democratic leadership's refusal to support the move. House Democratic Leader Jim Wright of Texas and House Deputy Whip Dan Rostenkowski, D-Ill., voted against it. Democratic Whip John Brademas, D-Ind., voted for it as did the House's top two Republican leaders, John Rhodes of Arizona and Bob Michel of Illinois.

The vote on Caputo's amendment reinforced the indication that the House feels the pressure is off on the Korean scandal. Just last fall, when news stories about the scandal appeared frequently, the House voted 205-181 to reject a similar move by Caputo — a considerably closer vote than yesterday's 254-146 rejection.

Seventy-eight Democrats and 68 Republicans voted for Caputo's motion, and 183 Democrats and 71 Republicans opposed it. All Washington area members opposed the amendment with the exception of Rep. Newton Steers, R-Md.